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# College Lectures-The Minister as an Executive revised

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COLLEGE LECTURES

No. 6 Revised

"THE MINISTER AS AN EXECUTIVE"



6th  
Revised

## The Minister as an Executive.

### 1.

He who would be a minister of a modern congregation must possess varied abilities.

It should be the obligation of the institution which would educate and discipline him for the ministry, not only to train him in theology, public speaking and as to his pastoral duties, but in executive and business sagacity and ability.

As a minister you will be at the head of a real business organization and its success will depend largely upon the efficiency of your management and leadership.

A young minister who is seeking his first pastorate has little choice to make. He can point to no achievements or present any glowing resolutions passed by former congregations. All this is in the future for him.

While the minister of long experience may have some advantages over the young man, nevertheless many prefer the younger, more virile and up-to-date minister.

If you properly care for both body and mind, and keep alive socially and young in spirit, you should be at your best after sixty years of age.

If you have been active during the years, grown in wisdom and grace and in the knowledge of the Scriptures and drank deeply at the spiritual fountain, you will be more valuable as a minister than at any other period of your life.

You should be careful not to become a foggy or a fossil at any time. When you cease to be a student, get out of touch with modern life and fail to apply the Living Word to the needs of your time, you are in the way for the on-going of the Kingdom and should retire.

When you have gone to your first pastorate, which should be for a church you honestly believe to be a needy field, you should be wise and tactful in opening up your work.



## The Minister as an Executive - Cont'd.

If, before being formally called, you have been requested to preach a trial sermon, do not make a great spread of your learning.

Be earnest, natural, not too manifestly anxious to be called, but let it be felt by all that you really believe your message and preach it to convict and help people.

Having taken up the work, use care and tact in beginning. Do not attempt to revolutionize everything, although they may need it. Approach your innovations and reforms slowly and tactfully.

Don't begin to find fault with the hymnals, the choir, the pulpit furniture, the service, the system of getting the needed money, and the way it is handled.

Although your splendid executive insight could readily suggest better methods, you must move slowly. Nothing will more quickly "queer" you and at once kindle a spirit of questioning and even opposition, than for the "upstart" to come in and upset their long established methods and customs.

A good executive will be able to handle the situations so wisely that he may in due time make all desired changes without opposition.

Get the confidence of the people, give them time to forget their former minister, make a careful study of the needs and of the temperament of the leaders, being so tactful in the suggestions of changes that they will feel that they have long desired to do the very things that you suggest.

If you possess the sagacity and ability to organize all of your departments and head them up with the best leadership you have and then train them departmentally and see that they work smoothly and articulate properly you will have a splendid and useful organization. Then keep the machinery well oiled so it will run nicely and without friction. It will require some executive ability



3.

to do all this and keep it a going and useful concern.

Executive ability may be considered a natural talent, but like any other talent we possess, it may be disciplined and developed.

Give the closest attention to this for your success as a minister will very largely depend upon your ability to properly handle the forces,- the men, women and children - over whom you have assumed leadership.

If you find it difficult to do this, that is, if your people do not respond to your attempt to organize them, do not be discouraged. Give a little closer study to your plans. Perhaps they are not just suited to the situation and will have to be altered some.

Get a little better acquainted with your people so that you may be better able to fit your program to them.

All programs are not adapted to all congregations. What may work beautifully in one place, may not go at all in another. Often a pastor makes a mistake by trying to force the adoption of a certain plan that has proven successful in a former congregation he has served. Many coming from the East want to adopt methods which are successfully used there, but quite like the eastern architecture, are not adapted to our western culture and methods and the sense of the beauty and fitness of things.

I would emphasize the suggestion that a careful survey of your congregation be made and then think out and prepare a plan that is adapted to it, so far as that is possible. At some places your program must be quite simple.

For example, in a smaller congregation you will have to be Director of Religious Education, plan for your music, arrange for your prayer meeting and social functions but you must not handle any more of the detail of your plans or programs than is necessary. You must realize that each member of the church needs and is entitled to



# The Minister as an Executive - Cont'd.

the privilege of helping somewhere.

See as far as possible that every member of your congregation has the opportunity of having some personal part in the total task of the Church.

One is more interested and happier with something to do in the life of a church than if relegated to only filling a pew occasionally. The less he has to do the less frequent will be his presence in the meetings of the church.

You must have an adequate understanding of the need for and the effective technique of church music, dramatics finance, benevolence, ushering, socials, publicity, equipment, etc.

You must keep informed as to the most effective and modern methods of church work in its various fields of endeavor.

Keep in touch with your Official Board and individual officers, and see that it and they function properly. Often this will require tactful urging.

You will have to use rare executive ability in planning and arranging for your Sunday School, young people's organizations and other departments of your church. While all of these will be headed up with selected leaders, you must see that they properly function. That is up to you as the head of your organization, remembering that you are running a real business and very much depends upon its proper management.

Some men are able to run a large business smoothly and seemingly without much effort. This is largely due to the proper organization of the machinery and the wise selection of departmental heads and then tactfully seeing that each one keeps up with the demands of his department and co-operates or functions with every other department. That is what you must do. Do not fuss around, stirring everybody up to a nervous frenzy.

When the leadership of any department or a task of any kind be given to any person you must be careful not to



Keep build a budget. & then  
see that Ch. keeps close to it -

Keep your eye on the financial  
Therms management

See bills are promptly paid

Prevent deficits

Have frequent talk with Fin. Secy & Treas  
Don't permit careless handling  
offered by any department

Have books & accounts

properly keep -

Have books properly audited

See that your obligations not only locally  
are kept, but to the larger fields -

College, missionary, peace

Give attention to Ch. Bulletin & Ch. papers



## The Minister as an Executive - Cont'd.

trespass or interfere with his work. Some pastors will select a committee and because it may be slow or inefficient in carrying out the task given it, step in and do the work. This is never wise.

I know often, if any given task is to be done, the pastor must do it, but this interference with leaders or committees is generally resented by them and it at least discourages them and it is not long until they will neglect their assignment or refuse to function at all.

You must not forget that there are people of ability in your church, who can attend to all these duties if given just a little leading and encouragement. This is your part. Do this so tactfully that they will not consider that you are interfering with their plans.

The church needs leadership and you should select the most likely material you have and carefully develop it so that you can assign these people to certain departments with the assurance that the assignment will be properly handled.

In fact the development of each of your members in the congregation in ability and usefulness should be a part of your great task as executive, for after all, the measure of weakness or strength of the congregation and even its various departments, largely depends upon you. At least you will receive either the blame or the credit.

With all your departmental organizations and various plans you must be careful not to have your church over-organized. You can make it so heavy and complicated that it will fail of its own weight. However good a program you may make, it is of no avail, unless it is, as we say "put over" properly. John Houser.

~~You must be careful and prevent any cliques or classes being formed or unconsciously developed. This sometimes will require rare skill on your part. Certainly never be lined up with any group against another.~~



It requires good judgment and discrimination for a minister to devote an equitable amount of time to his varied duties. Some give much time to preparation of sermons and neglect their pastoral duties, while others spend much of their time out among their flocks and have poor sermons Sunday.

The pastor has a great task before him all the time. He must visit and comfort the sick, those in sorrow, the aged and those who are becoming indifferent to their religious duties and faith. He must also visit those not yet in the Church. He must keep a general oversight of the Bible School; have general administrative oversight of all departments of his Church.

You must be careful to prevent any cliques or classes being formed or unconsciously developed. This sometimes will require rare skill on your part. Certainly never be lined up with any group against another.



## The Minister as an Executive - Cont'd.

. Handling your youths and girls in "teen" age requires the skill of a genius. A great and valuable program may be developed with your young people outside of the technically religious training and yet closely allied to it, at least to life.

There are so many questions interlocking that I may seem to repeat in these studies. Naturally, in discussing all phases of the minister's life and work many will be so related that reference at least must be made to others when discussing them.

Shall the pastor have his office in the church or in his own residence? This is a question that has two sides. We might say the parson's doorbell is rung frequently enough without forcing all the business callers of the church to annoy the family.

If living in a rented house, the location would usually change. If the parsonage is located adjoining or close to the church the annoyance to the family on account of frequent calls is so much greater than if located in some distant part of the city.

Frequently too, our modern churches are equipped with a business office convenient for callers. Some churches have also provided for a pastor's study, where he keeps his library and equipment.

I would be my judgment that the church is the place for the office, where the minister may be seen at certain stated hours.

You must be a student of church architecture, so you would have some real valuable information to give should your church erect a new building.

Give some attention to the beautifying of your church property. I knew a church edifice, the lines of which were pleasing, but the grounds about it, barren and unsightly. This building was on a much traveled highway and could easily have been made attractive, even beautiful.



Handling your people and this is "teen" age re-

quires the skill of a genius. A great and valuable pro-  
You must keep an eye on  
the technical training of the people outside of  
so it, at least to life.

the financial & business  
management.

See bills are promptly paid

Present deficit

Help in building  
budget & see that Church  
Close to it -

Careful not to permit too many  
appeals to be made -

Don't permit Carver's handling  
of funds by any department -

See that your obligation not  
only locally are kept, but to the  
larger fields - College, Museum,  
pension -

See about Ch. Collections - & papers  
Have frequent talks with your Treasurer  
& know about finances & delinquencies



The Minister as an Executive - Cont'd.

Give thoughtful care to your own church property, not only the grounds about, but the interior. See that it is kept up and that everything is clean and in order before the hour for services. Have all the equipment in order and properly cared for. Be on the lookout for something that would add to the efficiency and attractiveness of your church.

When you come to leave a church, do so gracefully and in a fine spirit. Sense the feelings of your people before any open manifestation of dissatisfaction is made. Often the minister is the last one to know the true situation. Sometimes everyone else knows it before he does.

Be the first to suggest a move. Do this to some of the church officials. Go too, when the church is enjoying prosperity. Leave everything in good shape for your successor and go in a way that all will esteem you highly and you can always feel that you are a welcome visitor to the church, as well as to any of the homes of the members. This is much better than to remain on and fight for a continuance of your pastorate. This is often done and a divided church is the result.

The opposition to you may be without foundation. It may arise, as it usually does, not from the congregation as a whole but from a militant minority. It may be on the other hand, incompatibility or a too liberal position taken.

Whatever may be the actual reason for leaving a plausible statement may be made to the public. The congregation is generally quite willing to have the real reason of the separation of pastor and church glossed over and of course, the preacher wants nothing but favorable publicity. One of many plausible excuses may be made, such as that his throat demands a drier climate, or his wife's health requires a change; seeking work in more populace centers if in the country, and if in the city, wanting a smaller place in which to rear and educate your children. Almost any excuse will be accepted by the public, who may know that is an excuse and not a reason.



## The Minister as an Executive - Cont'd.

When the time comes however, leave in a fine spirit.

J. W. Allen.

Story of pastor upon leaving - a banquet given - speeches of appreciation made - so puffed him up that he arose and said that if his dear people felt his going so keenly he would withdraw his resignation.

The business methods of the church have long been subject of criticism. I therefore, urge you to so manage the affairs of your congregation that it will be commended for its clean, prompt business methods.

Arrange your Ch. program  
so you can take vacation. Do not  
leave until definite arrangements to  
care for your work made

Look up & make needed provision  
for needy  
Guard your people, those supposed  
to have means, from being im-  
posed upon, etc

Protect your brother ministers

Careful in giving endorsements  
to agencies or individuals. You  
must have personal knowledge of  
at least, as to their enterprises